



State of Arizona
Department of Education

Tom Horne
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

Memorandum

Date: January 28, 2009

SPED 09-01

To: Superintendents
Directors of Special Education

From: Colette E. Chapman, Deputy Associate Superintendent
Exceptional Student Services/Arizona Department of Education

RE: Response to Intervention (RTI)

The Exceptional Student Services (ESS) division has had several inquiries about continuing and ongoing support for RTI. This letter is to assure you that RTI will continue to be an active project within the Arizona Department of Education (ADE).

As you know, RTI is implemented in the general education arena. It is more fitting that RTI be led by general education rather than special education. For that reason, RTI will now be a collaborative effort led by the School Effectiveness Division rather than ESS.

For the past year, ESS has collaborated with other ADE sections for the purpose of developing an agency wide framework for RTI. We feel it is important that ADE provide guidance that will produce consistent implementation using the RTI framework.

The ESS division will focus on the special education eligibility determination using RTI and is in the process of developing guidance in this area.

Before ESS recognizes a district or charter schools' use of RTI for special education eligibility, the PEA will be required to complete the attached "Assurance Letter." The Assurance Letter is in lieu of the ESS approval process. The key difference will be submitting your plan internally for district or charter approval rather than directly to ESS.

Once you have completed the Assurance Letter, please send a copy to your ESS Education Program Specialist and to Lisa Andrew, Director of CSPD at 1535 W. Jefferson, Bin #24, Phoenix, AZ 85007.

For RTI training opportunities please contact Mary Wennersten, Education Program Specialist, K-12 Reading at 602-364-2355.

[PRINT ON DISTRICT/CHARTER LETTERHEAD]

**Public Education Agency (PEA) Assurances
regarding the use of Response to Intervention
to identify students with Specific Learning Disabilities**

The [name of district/charter] intends to use response to intervention (RTI) as a component of the evaluation of students suspected of having a specific learning disability (SLD). The PEA assures the Arizona Department of Education, Exceptional Student Services (ADE/ESS) that the PEA has in place the following requirements:

- The general evaluation requirements identified in the 34 C.F.R. §§300.301-300.306.
- The additional evaluation procedures for identifying children with SLD as specified in 34 C.F.R.. §§300.307-300-311.
- Scientific research-based instruction (as identified in the ESEA §9101 (37) in the areas of the curriculum in which RTI will be used for the identification of SLD.
- Data-based documentation through repeated assessments of achievement (progress monitoring) that a student has not made adequate progress in the general curriculum in spite of a systematic approach and tiered interventions delivered by qualified personnel.
- A district-approved implementation plan for the adoption/use of RTI for SLD eligibility.

The PEA intends to implement RTI as an evaluation component in the following school(s) including specific content areas and grade levels:

School Name	Content Area(s)	Grade(s)

The PEA understands that the information gained from progress monitoring and tiered intervention may provide sufficient information to determine eligibility without additional assessments. The PEA also understands that the collection of additional data beyond the information obtained through an RTI approach will be necessary in some cases or if the parent makes such a request.

The PEA will submit a new assurance to the ADE/ESS if additional schools, content areas or grades are added to the use of RTI as part of the procedures for the eligibility of students as SLD.

Chief Administrative Officer

Special Education Director